

In China.

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER. Forget them not, O Christ, who stand Thy vanguard in the distant land. In flood, in flame, in dark, in dread. Sustain, we pray, each lifted head. Be Thou in every faithful breast, Be peace and happiness and rest. Exalt them over every fear, In peril come Thyself more near. Let heaven above their pathway pour A radiance from its open door.

Turn Thou the hostile weapons, Lord, Rebuke each wrathful alien horde.

Thine are the loved for whom we crave That Thou wouldst keep them strong and brave.

Thine is the work they strive to do. Their foes so many, they so few.

Yet Thou art with them, and Thy name Forever lives, is aye the same.

Thy conquering name, O Lord, we pray, Quench not its light in blood to-day.

Be with Thine own, Thy loved, who stand Christ's vanguard in the storm-swept land.

—The Congreg. tionalist.

God's Ability.

BY REV. A. C. DIXON, D. D.

The power of God is one thing. The ability of God is another. God is all-powerful at all times, but He may not be all-able.

Last Summer, while a party of us were traveling in the mountains, our train suddenly stopped in the woods, and we were compelled to wait in sweltering heat for more than five hours. The engine was full of power. Its muscles of steel were at their highest tension, and with the steam escaping in sudden gusts with screeching noise, it seemed to be impatient to be going. But it was unable to move a car. There was power without ability. A bolt had been broken, and until that bolt was mended, and the connection between the engine and the cars restored, the power could not be utilized. Jesus Christ was omnipotence standing among the people, but on one occasion He could do no mighty works because of their unbelief. (Mark 6:5, 6.) The bolt of faith through which His power worked, was broken.

And the Holy Spirit is to-day God with us, all-powerful, but He can do no mighty works unless the bolt of faith is in place. Three little words I would have you write in letters of light upon every difficulty you meet: "God is able."

And it should be our highest ambition to enable God by meeting the conditions through which His power becomes ability.

"God is able"

to save. The death of Christ enables Him to save sinners.

Luther emphasized justification by faith, and he meant by that the justification of the sinner before God. But back of the justification of the sinner is the justification of God. "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness, that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Through the death of Christ, God can be just, and the justifier of the believer. He who rejects the death of Christ as the ground of his justification, breaks the bolt, and cuts off the power of God to justify at all. God's power to justify becomes ability only through our faith.

And now that the sinner has been justified before God, he will be saved by the living Christ. "Reconciled to God by the death of His Son, we shall be saved by His life." "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

A prosperous worldly man, whose Christian wife had died praying for his conversion, was lying awake in the darkness of his room, when he heard a voice from a little bed at his side, "Papa, it's so dark; take my hand." He took the little hand extended in the dark, and held it gently until the frightened child dropped asleep. Then this strong business man looked up through the darkness, and said, "Father, it is so dark; take my hand as I have taken the hand of my dear child. Give me rest of soul for Jesus sake." Peace entered his broken heart, and he rejoiced in full salvation. The sense of helpless weakness had led him to stretch the hand of his soul up to God, and Jesus Christ crucified and risen from the dead was saved by which God took hold and saved him in a moment. For him to have asserted his independence would of course have been to break the bolt through which God's power became ability to save.

While Henry Richards on the Congo preached the law and Biblical history, no one was converted; but when he began to preach Christ and Him cruci-

fied, at once the sad faces of the heathen began to lighten with a new joy, and in a short time there were hundreds of happy converts. The law and Biblical history does not furnish the bolt that links us with God's power to save.

A missionary to the Indians proclaimed the death and resurrection of Jesus as the only ground of salvation, and some wild savages were soon tamed by the power of God. Their chief said to him one day, "Years ago a man came and preached to us that there was a God, and we told him we knew that before he came. We worshipped the Great Spirit whose voice is in the thunder. Another came and told us that we must not get drunk and abuse our wives, and we knew that. But you told us that God loves us, and showed His love by giving His Son to die for us. This touches our hearts. We need a God that loves us. And thus the love of God, as manifested in the death of Christ, became the bolt which linked these Indians with the power of God that enabled Him to 'save them to the uttermost.'"

"God is able"

to succor. "In that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." (Hebrews 2:18.)

The suffering of Christ on the Cross enables God to save sinners from guilt, but it takes the suffering of Christ in temptation to enable Him to succor them that are tempted. Many refuse to accept Christ and confess Him before men because they fear that they will not be able to hold out against the temptations which they know will come. Such fear is groundless, for as you trust the dying Christ to atone for your sins, you may trust the tempted Christ that now lives to succor you in the hour of temptation. Are you tempted to do wrong that you may secure the necessities of life? Remember, that Jesus was tempted to obey the Devil by turning stones into bread. He chose to suffer hunger that He might succor you in a similar temptation. Indeed, He was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," in order that through His sufferings in these temptations He might be able to "succor them that are tempted."

Are you fearful lest the supply of grace and goods may be exhausted? Listen again

"God is able"

to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." (2 Corinthians 9:8.)

A Western farmer was startled to find after a storm that the lightning had struck the cistern in his cellar, and emptied it of water. But a gurgling sound revealed the fact that the same stroke of lightning had split a rock, and opened the way to a hidden-flowing stream. He was glad to remove the debris of his cistern that he might get the supply from the never-ceasing fountain. The ability of God to supply all grace is a never-failing fountain. If the shattering of earthly cisterns shall reveal to us this fountain of supply, we shall be blessed indeed. And God in His goodness sometimes demolishes earthly cisterns by lightning strokes of Providence, that we may be led by our sense of helplessness and faith to enable Him to supply all our need "according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."—Sabbath Reading.

The Indwelling Word

It is not enough to study the Bible. An intellectual knowledge of the truth is good, but it comes short of our highest need. One might commit the Bible to memory and understand all the deep things it contains, and be able to instruct men in its wonderful doctrines, and yet fail to receive the chief benefit which it is able to impart. It must go down into the heart and become the substance of our spiritual life. "Thy word have I hid in my heart." This is the right place for the word of God. To have it in the hand may do no good. To have it in the memory alone may be a curse instead of a blessing, for "he that knoweth his Master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes."

The apostle James speaks of the "ingrafted word." The process of grafting is exceedingly interesting. By this art of the husbandman a living branch is made to grow into, and become a part of the stem of another tree, and to bring forth fruit after its kind. So the word of God may be grafted into the human heart, become a part of the human life, and bear fruit unto holiness.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Too often other things crowd the word of Christ into a very small corner. This is an age of reading, but much of the reading of men and women profits little. The daily papers should be read, but very little time is required to get all the benefit

they can give. One who gives much time to the daily paper does so to the injury of his mind. Many books which should be read require but little time. But some time should be given to the Bible every day. Much time may be profitably devoted to a single passage.

There are many ways of reading the Bible. One may read it critically. It may be read for the purpose of preparing sermons or Sunday-school lessons. Some read the Bible for its literary beauty. Others read it to obtain a knowledge of the principles of government and law. But the best way to read the Bible is to read it devotionally. Read it to find out the will of God and learn the way of life. Read it with an attentive mind, to hear what the Lord will say.

Reading the Bible devotionally requires great deliberation. The reader should be in no hurry to finish a task. He should not drive himself through a chapter or an entire book at a single sitting. It may be well to do this sometimes, but not when reading to kindle his devotions. At such times let him read a single verse or paragraph, and then stop and consider well what is contained in the passage. Turn it over and over in the mind, and view it in every light. Read it again in the original, if possible, or in some other language. Work it over, as the ore from the mine is worked over, in order to secure every particle of pure gold.

Let the word have free course. Follow it whithersoever it may lead. Give it an open mind. Remove every obstruction; let it run and be glorified. Yield the conscience and the affections to every suggestion it contains. If it be a precept, yield ready and cheerful obedience. If the task be difficult, shrink not back. "Give the word of God ample room. Require daily papers, books of science, history, and fiction to give way to this higher truth and light. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Keep the precious treasure. Hold it fast in memory and in the affections.

When the word of God dwells richly in the soul there will be light. There will be no heresy. There will be no backsliding, no lukewarm spirit. "The entrance of Thy word giveth light."—Chris. Advocate.

I Believe in the Resurrection of the Body.

It becomes our preachers to be clear in their understandings. The old foundation truths, which prop the everlasting distinction of right and wrong, sin and purity, must be clearly brought out to knowledge and conviction.

The truth is that the body is God's; by creation and redemption His—that it is not the soul's prison, but the soul's instrument; the hands to work Christ's service, the feet to travel Christ's way, the brain to plan and the heart to feel for good; that so man in the flesh is to serve God in his flesh and by his flesh—this needs re-statement again and again.

And that the body's stain is the soul's stain, that man cannot divide his nature and give half and Satan half, that he bears the body's guilt, and his soul's guilt alike, that he cannot lay his sins down in the grave to rot with his body in which they were committed, that his body like his soul is a responsibility and is on probation, that sins against the body are unnatural, against nature, against humanity and against God—this needs clearing, for it is largely forgotten.

And the last awful truth of all, that before the judgment seat of Christ, not the disembodied soul, the vague phantom of modern necromancers, but the man—body, soul, and spirit—the hands that worked, the brain that thought, the heart that conceived, the eyes that lusted, the feet that ran to their lust, these all, with no escape, with no vagueness, shall stand to answer for their deeds; this stern and awful truth, the tremendous sanction of Christian holiness, must be forced on the conscience of a generation that has drifted far from the clear cut distinctions of Christian Law.

In these days the trumpet should give no uncertain sound when we repeat the Old Belief—"I believe—in the Resurrection of the Body."—The Bishop of Mississippi in Church News.

The Only Way.

A Missionary visiting a dying man inquired about his soul. "Well," the sick man said, feebly, "I think my chance of getting to Heaven is pretty good." "You must have some reason for thinking so. Please tell me what it is."

Slowly the answer came, "I have been kind to my wife and children, and I have not intentionally wronged my fellowmen." "It is nice to be able to say that; but what kind of a place do you think Heaven is?" "I think there is no sin or sorrow there, and I think they sing a good deal." Turning to Rev. 1:5, the missionary said:

"Yes, they do sing, and I will read you a song they sing. 'Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.' Notice, they have not a word to say about what they have done. It is all about what He has done. Now, suppose you were up there, and had got there because you had been good to your family, there would be one sinner in Heaven who had never been washed from his sin by the blood of Jesus. You could not join in the song they sing, could you?"

The silence grew painful. His look, as he answered, was as one waking from a dreadful dream. "I never thought of that before." "God has, and wrote a verse for such as you. I'll read it. It is Romans 4:4. 'Now unto him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.' When you could work, you received your wages, because you had earned them. You could talk to your wife about what you had done, and need not mention the man who paid you. Now if you could get to Heaven by what you have done, there would be no grace about it. You would be there without a Saviour, and you would have no song."

The sick man saw the truth, and frankly confessed he was a sinner. The missionary read 1 Titus 1:15, and the man repeated, "To—save—sinners!" Then the missionary read Acts 16:31, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

The man did believe, and his hope was founded, not on what he had done, but upon what Christ had done. The next morning, when the missionary called, his face was bright with joy, as he said, "Oh, I'll have a song. It will be 'Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.'" A few days afterwards he fell asleep in Jesus.—Abbie O. Morrow.

The Small Congregations.

On stormy days, or when other unfavorable conditions dwarf a congregation to a mere handful of people, then the question arises, or is likely to arise, in the minister's mind, What shall I do? What shall you do? Why, your duty is plain. If God sent you at that time and to that place with a message, he knew just how many would be present, and it is your duty to deliver his message. Yes, deliver it with as much unction and zeal as though the house were full of waiting people. Do your duty faithfully, at all times and under all circumstances, and leave the results with God.

Here is an incident in the life of Bishop Randall who at one time was announced to preach in an Eastern church in behalf of his missionary work in Colorado. Only six persons appeared, and it is said for a moment the good bishop hesitated. Finally he concluded that it was his duty to carry out his appointment. The question of congregation was none of his business. Accordingly the service went on, and he preached his sermon to the six people. In the collection which followed was a single offering of two hundred dollars. This amazed him. The next day he received a note from a gentleman asking him to call at such an office. The bishop responded, "I am the one," said the gentleman, "who gave you the two hundred dollars last night. But after getting home I did not feel quite satisfied with doing that. I propose to make up the sum of one thousand dollars, and here is my check for the balance."—Unknown.

Remember.

The following sentences from the writings of Thomas a Kempis could be read every day with profit. The wholesome truths they teach should be stored in the memory and practiced in daily life:

Remember always thy end, and that time lost never returns. Without care and diligence thou shalt never get virtue.

If thou begin to wax lukewarm, it will begin to be evil with thee.

But if thou give thyself to fervor of spirit, thou shalt find much peace, and feel less labor, through the assistance of God's grace and the love of virtue.

The fervent and diligent man is prepared for all things.

It is harder work to resist vices and passions than to toil in bodily labors.

He that avoideth not small faults, by little and little falleth into greater.

Thou wilt always rejoice in the evening, if thou spend the day profitably.

Be watchful over thyself, stir up thyself, admonish thyself, and, whatever becomes of others, neglect not thyself.

The more holy violence thou usest against thyself, the greater shall be thy spiritual profiting.

"BALM OF HURT WOUNDS," so Shakespeare terms sleep, but irritated breathing tubes prevent sleep through desire to cough. Balsam is the same word as balm, and the balm for wounded lungs is Adamson's Botanic Cough Balsam. 25c. all Druggists.

Fretfulness.

It seems to be natural for some people to fret. If they can find a cause in the realm of the real they take it, but if not in the real they call in their imagination and search one out somewhere in the realm of the possible. Fret they will, and if they have no cause they make one. They do not limit themselves to any particular period of time in their search for something to fret about. The past is a favorite resort for them and they fret about things that might have been but are past forever quite as freely as about things of the present. And even more liberty is taken with the future in their search for things which may be (or may not be)

If in vain they search and find no other cause they even seem sometimes to fret because they have nothing to fret about. Their very happiness, of a very low order to be sure, seems to consist in fretting. Of course, fretfulness causes misery to all associated with the fretter. It is as selfish as it is wrong in other ways. No one can justify it. Don't fret.—Immanuel Messenger.

Whether we like it or not, we live in glass houses. The mind, the memory, the soul, is simply a vast chamber paneled with looking-glass. And upon this miraculous arrangement and endowment depends the capacity of moral souls to "reflect the character of the Lord."—Drummond.

Said a minister at a funeral service: "Fourteen years ago to-day this corpse joined this church!" It is to be feared that there are a number of unburied corpses in every church.—New York Observer.

The man who lives to please himself will find that he has a hard master.

This life will mean more when we realize that it is the pathway to the next.

This world is too small to afford a place of safety to the man who disobeys God.

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